

17.
A
VINDICATION

Of Mr. Christopher Love,

FROM

Divers scandalous reproaches cast upon
him by the Malignant party.

Who charge him to be a hinderer of the
Treaty at Uxbridge, and a disturber of
the Peace of this Common-Wealth.

WHEREIN

He cleareth himself from those aspersi-
ons; and sheweth that he always constantly
endeavoured that Peace with Truth
might be established; to the Glory of
God, and the comfort of this
NATION.

*Written with his own hand, before his death, and now
published for General satisfaction.*

LONDON,

Printed by R. Wood, 1651.

A VINDICATION

OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

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Vindication of Mr. Christopher Love

from divers reproaches cast upon him by
the Malignant party.



IF a mans good name be as precious Oyntment, there will not be wanting many Flyes (to carry about flying Reports) to corrupt it: Although I deserve not a name among the children of the most high God, yet would I not lose that room which any hath vouchsafed me in their hearts, not be made an abhorring to them. 'Tis true, this Sermon which I preacht at *Uxbridge* exposeth me to the envy of the bad, the jealousie of the good, yea the scandalous Reports of all; should I now be silent, I should strengthen those reports, and ratifie the rumours unjustly raised against me. I confesse the meannesse of my gifts, and fewnesse of my years, (being no more then 28.) doth lay a great discouragement upon my spirit to come into publick view, to hold forth the dim light of a candle now the Sun shineth; to bring in my poor mite, when men now adayes cast in of their abundance into Gods Treasury; had I not been prest under the

pressure

pressure of reproaches, I should never have brought my *Sermon* (which I preacht at *Oxbridge*) to the Press; when I Preacht it, I accounted it no other then as an untimely birth, that should never see the Sun; the reason why I now bring it to light, is not any high conceit that I have of it, but a false conceit that many have both of the *Sermon*, and myself that preacht it. I am presented to the world as an enemy to Treaties, or a peace by that way; I can make my Appeal to Heaven, where my witnesse is, that in the travel of my Soul I have uncessantly cryed unto God for a good successe to that Treaty, that by it Peace and ~~rich~~ might flourish in our dayes, onely an unsound and an unsafe peace have I preached and prayed against.

I have onely two things faithfully and humbly to present to your consideration. First, the *Call* that I had to preach at *Oxbridge* at that day. Secondly, the *Matter* which I preacht. For the first, viz. the *Call* that I had to preach, I shall briefly relate: On Wednesday night the 29 of *January*, (being the monethly Fast) I had notice that the Commissioners were come to *Oxbridge*, and that Mr. *Martial* or some other Minister that attended upon the Honourable Commissioners, was to preach the Thursday following; (which was the first day of the Treaty) hearing of this, I rode from *Wind/or* Castle to *Oxbridge* on Thursday morning; went forthwith to Mr. *Martial*, to know whether he Preacht, who told me he did not, yet said that there was a Sermon: soon after I went towards the Church to be an Hearer. As I was going, I met the Governour of the Town, who told me that he with others had been waiting in the Congregation

gation for a Sermon, but the Minister expected to preach was not come; whereupon he desired me that I would preach, else the Congregation would be disappointed. To whom I answered, that I had no thoughts of preaching, but to be an hearer, yet rather then the Congregation should be disappointed, I would spend some half an hour to give them a word of *Exhortation*, which accordingly I did. Now whether this was not a hand of Heaven to cast me upon the work, let my accusers themselves be Judges. I am constrained to write the manner how I came to preach, to wipe off those scandals that are cast upon me. Some say that I intruded my self on the work, when divers can tell how earnestly Capt. *Hampton*, the Governour of the Town, did sollicite me, telling me else the Congregation would be disappointed. Some were so shamelesse as to say, that I thrust M. *Martial* down the Pulpit staires, when 't's well known M. *Martial* was not there all that day; besides, had he been there to preach, I am so far from doing any such unchristian action, as to rob the Congregation of the Labours of him whose Books I am now worthy to carry after him, yea (if it were an expression meet for a meer man, I could say, whose *shoe-latchet* I am not worthy to untye. Others say, that one Mr. *Kem* was to preach; others say, some adjacent Minister, (whose turn it was to supply the lecture that day) whether the one or the other, I knew not then; onely this I know, it was almost a 11 of the clock when I was entreated to preach: the Governour and some of the people came out of the Congregation, thinking they had been disappointed of a Sermon; yea, I did my self also bid the Clark call a long

long Psalm, that so if the Minister who was appointed to preach had come in the mean time, he might have supplied the place.

Object. What ever your Call was to preach that day, yet the matter which you preacht was unseasonable in that place, before that Audito^ry, and at that time.

To which I answer, First, it was their usual Lecture-day; but a Country Auditory, none of the Commissioners of either side were there. Secondly, Had they been there, I spake not a word touching the Commissioners of either side, only I rayd for our own. Thirdly, if any thing were unreasonable, it must be this; I advis'd the Auditors not to dote too much on Treaties of Peace: What unseasonableness was in this? I hope a Minister may advise a people not to dote too much upon ordinances, or upon duties, yet this no disparagement to either, or to the authority of God that enjoyns both; one may advise another not to dote too much upon Wife and children, yet this advice doth not reflect to the disgrace of either: in the like manner, might not a Minister advise a Congregation not to dote too much upon that Treaty, yet this advice no wayes reflects on the Treaters, or Treaty it self. I said further, that whiles our enemies go on in their wicked practices, and whiles we keep to our principles, we may as soon make fire and water to agree, and (I had almost said) reconcile Heaven and Hell, as their spirits and ours; either they must grow better, or we must grow worse, before it is possible for us to agree; wherein is this unseasonable? shew me, and I will fall down with an acknowledgment at your feet.

Object. Why did you not write this Vindication sooner; had there not been a fault you would not have been so long silent, and suffer many aspersions thus to spread.

To which I briefly answer, First, I acknowledge such a sense and apprehension I have of these poor fruits of my studies, that I had no thoughts at all to print my Sermon, had not the importunity of divers friends, who are both godly and wise, prevail'd with me, as also the consideration that

these

these scandals would not onely reflect upon my self, but on other Ministers also who cleave to the Parliament proceedings, as if they were of the same spirit that I am unjustly presented to the World to be of; had not these considerations swayed with me, I should not have brought my Sermon to publick view, but have waited in silence, submission, and patience on my God for a Vindication, knowing assuredly the innocency and integrity of my heart and carriage to be clear in this matter; I blesse God, the integrity of my spirit (being in nothing about this matter conscious to my self) hath been as a brazen wall against all the scandals which have hence been darted against me, that none of them have entred to to pierce the quietnesse and content of my spirit; I remember what the Poet said,

---*Hic murus abienus esto*

Nil conscire sibi, nulla pallescere culpa.

Secondly, it was meet I should be thus long silent, lest I should have anticipated the Parliament (before whom some accusations against me were presented) I should have been pragmaticall, unwise, yea also have blenish't my own vindication; I should not I have waited for their determinations; who have (by an Order of the House of Commons) cleared and acquitted me touching this matter.

It was requisite I should stay untill the Treaty was over, lest it might exasperate the spirits of our enemies, and so father that on me as if I had not a peaceable disposition, which indeed is the bastard that ought to be layed before their own doores; though their words be smother then butter, yet war is in their hearts, but Peace in mine.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, I deemed it my best way to wait a while in silence that I might the better hear and know the scandalous aspersions cast upon me, that I might the easier clear my self. Some report that I ran out of *Oxbridge* as soon as I had preacht the Sermon, as being ashamed of what I had done, whereas 'tis known by divers I went publickly up and down the Town, and staid at least four hours after the sermon in the Town; others say that I retired my self, and kept out of the way when I was sent for by the Parliament, when divers can testify I went up and down the City; yea, was so far from hiding my self from any Court of Judicature, that I used meanes that I might be heard; that I might come to answer the accusations that were against me. Malignants (who would have it so) reported that I was whipt out of *Oxbridge*, or committed close prisoner in *Oxbridge* by our Commissioners, brought in a Cart to *London*, committed by the Parliament close Prisoner to *Newgate*, with many other lying reproaches would they fasten upon me, whereas 'tis well known I was never before either Parliament, or Honourable Commissioners imployed by them, or any else about this business, only I was sent for by an Order of the House of Commons, but in regard nothing was brought in against me, I was by them acquitted.

Thus Courteous Reader, referring my self to thy favourable censure, I humbly take leave for this time; pressing my self to be

An earnest well-wisher to Truth and Peace,
with them who love both in sincerity,

Christopher Love.



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